



CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City to Participate in Statewide Tornado Drill Tornado Preparedness Day, Tuesday, March 15, 2005

FALLS CHURCH, VA. – In an effort to promote safety and preparedness, the City of Falls Church encourages all residents, businesses, homeowner and community organizations, and others to participate in Virginia Tornado Preparedness Day on March 15, 2005. A statewide tornado drill will be held at 9:45 a.m. that will provide an opportunity to practice tornado safety plans. At the same time, the National Weather Service along with state and local emergency officials will test their public warning systems.

In Virginia, most tornadoes occur from April to October between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m., but they can strike at any time with little or no advance warning. Last year, 86 tornadoes touched down in Virginia.

The City offers the following tips for tornado preparedness:

- The general rule for tornado safety is “go low and stay low,” which means go to the lowest level of the structure away from windows and crouch in a low position with your head covered.
- Mobile homes and cars are extremely unsafe during a tornado. Take cover inside a nearby sturdy building. If that’s not possible, lie down in a ditch away from your mobile home or car and cover your head with your hands.
- Know the difference between a tornado WATCH and a tornado WARNING. A WATCH means current weather conditions may result in a tornado. A tornado WARNING means a tornado has been sighted. When a tornado WARNING is issued for your area, take cover immediately.
- Think of where you would normally be during peak tornado hours (between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.)...at school, at work, in the car. You may only have a few seconds to react. Decide now where you would go if a tornado warning were issued.
- Tornadoes can occur with little or no advance warning. It's important to have a weather radio nearby so you can listen for tornado watches and warnings. If the National Weather Service issues a tornado warning for your area, your weather radio will sound an alert, indicating you need to move to a safe area immediately.

For more information about tornado preparedness, visit www.ci.falls-church.va.us or call 703-248-5003. Additional information is available on the Virginia Department of Emergency Management Web site at www.vaemergency.com/05torn.

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